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NEW-YORK DAGUERREOTYPED.

PRIVATE RESIDENCES.

PRIVATE dwellings in a country like the United States, where every man labors for his own individual comfort, and not for the glory of the state, or the ambition of a monarch, offer the best evidences of the prosperity, the intelligence, and the general taste of the people. It is in the private mansions which are built, ornamented, and furnished to conform to the tastes, the incomes, and the exigencies of their occupants, and not in the public edifices that we must look for the true development of the national taste. The case is different in other countries; even in England, the residences of the most noble and wealthy are of secondary importance when compared with the palaces of the monarch, and the edifices appropriated to state uses. But, a traveller from the old world sees at a glance, in landing in our city, that here every man is a monarch in his own right, and that palaces are built by the people for their own enjoyment and not for the comfort of a prince. Hence we have an immense number of very fine houses; which, in the aggregate, form streets of greater beauty than any city of the old world can boast of, but no single building to be compared with the splendid triumphs of architecture which constitute the glory and attraction of Paris. Splendors of architecture are not to be looked for here, excepting in the shape of bridges and aqueducts, until we shall have been educated to the point of discovering the superior advantages of a combination of interests in our private dwellings, to the present independent and isolated style of construction; when it shall be found that twenty or thirty families may live in a palace by combining their means, in the construction of one capacious dwelling, while they would be

compelled to live in an inconvenient and plain house, if each one built separately. Our hotels are an indication of what might be done by the plan we have hinted at; but, in the mean while, we are living and learning at a very fast rate, and building, like bees, better than we know. The exigencies of our rapid growth, the sudden accumulations of large fortunes, and the instincts of our building architects, are daily manifesting themselves in some remarkable examples of architectural ingenuity and external ornamentation, which put all precedent at defiance, and set at naught established rules. New-York is continually rising like a phoenix from the ashes, and, at each revival with increased elegance and splendor. The old economical style of buildings, without a shadow of ornament, which succeeded the more imposing structures of ante-revolutionary times have nearly all disappeared, and scarcely a vestige of old New-York remains. Stores and warehouses occupy the sites of the houses in which the last generation lived, and the new city has risen up like enchantment telling of new times, a new people, new tastes, and new habits. The old houses in Broadway were all of brick, and plain in their exteriors beyond belief; and the cheapest "colony houses" of the present day, built for the accommodation of poor emigrant families, are elegant structures, externally, compared with the city residences of our wealthiest families but few years since. Plain brick fronts have been succeeded by dressed freestone and sculptured marble; plate glass has become universal, and lace window drapery has displaced the old chintz curtains which once flaunted their bright colors through small window panes.

The introduction of pure Greek models into England and this country, produced some slight improvement on this plain brick style, and in houses of the best class exhibited designs similar in character to those in Bond and Great Jones streets. But the most elegant Grecian mansion in New-York is, without doubt, that in College Place, at the corner of Murray-street. The Grecian style, however, is not easily adapted to modern uses, though more so than the Egyptian, which has been less successfully adopted by Mr. R. L. Stevens in his house in Barclay-street. The semi-circular Corinthian portico of the house in College Place has a bold and graceful appearance, being ascended by a handsome flight of steps

in front, to the old level of the College ground, on which it is built. Although two stories of architraved windows are not in strict accordance with a single Grecian order of columns, we should have preferred them to the mere slits between pilasters which are made to serve for windows in this building. The conservatory to the right, and the dome upon the roof extend and raise the composition to a good proportion. The opposite view from Murray-street, in which the portico appears backed by the trees, is even more picturesque than the one here given.

Twenty years ago, the houses in Waverley Place, forming the north side of Washington Square were among the finest private dwellings in New-York. These somewhat resemble the Philadelphia style of building, being of the smoothest red brick, with white marble porches, steps, and lintels;—too violent a contrast of color, and made worse by the addition of green blinds, instead of the Philadelphia white or brown shades. But Waverley Place is still the most uniform and imposing side of a



College Place and Murray-street.

square that New-York can boast of, and presents a solid, respectable, and cheerful aspect; while the interiors of some of the houses, for spaciousness and decoration, are not excelled by many in the Fifth Avenue.

About fifteen years ago, the white marble colonnade row in Lafayette Place was pointed out as the most ornamental block of that part of the city. In itself, this Corinthian colonnade is undoubtedly of great beauty; but it darkens the rooms, is of expensive and not solid construction, and assumes too much the character of a single public building. The balcony railings ought not to have concealed the bases of the columns, but to have been placed between them, or else omitted.

The Grecian taste, in which the above buildings are erected, has within the last few years been succeeded and almost entirely superseded, both here and in England, by the revival of the Italian style, of which the mansion in University Place, at the corner of Tenth-street, is one of our best-proportioned and most correct imita-

tions ; more particularly of that modification of it which prevails at Florence, which is visible in the circular-headed windows, and grooved stones of the principal story, and the carved *torus* string-course above them. The balcony, supported by brackets, over the door, is the best specimen of that kind of Italian portal that has been yet introduced : they are sometimes made so heavy, as to seem as if they would fall on our heads. The basement, principal story, dressings, and cornice of this building are of brown stone, while the plain wall above is of red brick. In this case, as in many others, we prefer this mixture of brick and stone to an entire stone front : the brown stone harmonizes well in color, and appears more brilliant by the contrast. We do not approve of the outside window-blinds, especially to circular-headed windows, as they form a disagreeable shape when thrown open. The dormer windows are not in accordance with the Italian style, but are small and unobtrusive. The area railings are very elegantly formed of small twisted pillars, and colored bronze.

At the corner of Tenth-street and Fifth Avenue stands a large, quaint, old-fashioned single house of red brick and brown stone,

with a steep slated roof, and conspicuously ornamented dormer windows ; which, when time shall have destroyed its freshness, and mellowed its tone, may appear to some stranger, from his native south or west, a relic of ante-revolutionary times. This is the residence of a French gentleman ; which may account for the owner's adoption of a style of building which would remind him of the courtly formality, and solid gentility of the olden time in his native country. The style of this building is a mixture of French and Italian, with a remnant of the Gothic principle traceable in the kneed architraves over the third story windows. Its general good effect will be found to arise from the windows not being too close together, and from the string-courses at every floor, which seem to bind it together, and form agreeable subdivisions of the whole mass. The railings and entrance steps are very rich and effective. A conservatory may be seen in the rear : there is also an entrance into the coach-yard beyond, not delineated in our cut.

"Every man's house is his castle," says the law-maxim ; but in these days of peace-societies, we cannot think the *castellated* Gothic the best style to build it



Waverley Place.

in! This observation applies to the two houses at the corner of Twelfth-street and Fifth Avenue; in which, even if we excused the choice of style, to which we have several objections to offer, we are obliged to notice several faults that might easily have been avoided. The attic windows are too wide; and all are without stone mullions, which are essentials in Gothic construction; while the external blinds,—inappropriate for Gothic windows, when closed, destroy all depth and shadow. The balconies and porches have no connection with the general design. In point of solid execution the buildings deserve praise, being entirely of brown stone, and the doors of real oak.

Our view of West Fourteenth-street from Fifth Avenue, exhibits one of the handsomest ranges of buildings of this size in the neighborhood. The doors and windows of this, as of many of our examples, are more enriched by carving than the small scale of our engravings can show. If the apertures of houses of this class were a little reduced in width and height, the construction and effect would be greatly improved, and the cost of the building diminished. The brackets to the cornice of the nearest houses are too far apart, and placed at unequal distances, which is against all rule. The balustrades to the area and steps are of iron, but solid and effective.

The fine residence at the corner of Fifth Avenue and West Fifteenth-street is a massive and dignified structure in the Italian style, of brown stone. The windows are simple, and uniform on every story, and are better proportioned, that is, narrower compared with the piers, than they are shown in our engraving. The principal decoration of the building is concentrated upon the entrance doorway,



Lafayette-place.

which consists of an arched recess between half-columns or pedestals, projecting from pilasters, of the Corinthian order. Two circular flights of steps with balustrades and pedestals, lead the eye in a graceful manner to this handsome entrance, and add apparent breadth to the base of the building. The only alteration we could desire to this house, would be, to have omitted some of the supernumerary blank windows on the side.

The Palladian residence of Mr. Haight, at the south corner of East Fifteenth-street and Fifth Avenue, erected some five years ago, was among the first mansions in the Italian style built in this city; and though it may have been since exceeded in richness of decoration, we doubt if it has been in good proportion, and purity of design. The ample space afforded between the windows countenances, if not demands the slight projection of the wall in the centre of each side, which is also made available in assisting the effect of the central door, wide windows and chimneys of the entrance front; and in grouping together the centre windows and

balconies of the other front, upon the Avenue. The arched entrance between two Tuscan half-columns is in the true Italian taste, and far preferable to a projecting portico in this situation: pilasters of the same order on the other front preserve a due correspondence. A lower range of offices, and a stable-yard entrance is seen down the street; while there is also another arched entrance for carriages between two projecting columns, on the right, not included in our view. The wide semi-circular basement windows are judiciously introduced.

The building is of brown stone.

The brown stone mansion of Colonel Thorne, in West Sixteenth-street, near Fifth Avenue, shares the merit of Mr. Haight's in being one of the first erected in the Italian style; and, though its situation is more retired, and it only presents a single ornamented front to the street, yet in chasteness and elegance of design it is fully equal if not superior. It has the advantage of standing back in an inclosed fore-court, with double gates and a carriage-drive sweeping under a portico, of the Tuscan order; the shaded recess behind is an open vestibule, with the same order continued round the inside, supporting a panelled ceiling. On each side of the entrance door is a niche, with a bronzed figure of a Mercury, holding a lamp: there are also two recumbent figures of dogs on the landing before the door. A pretty white marble basin and fountain stand in front of the portico, which are omitted in our engraving.

East Sixteenth-street, opposite St. George's Church. This is a well-proportioned row of houses, and the uniformity of such an extent of wall is pleasing and effective. The iron balconies appear solid,



Corner of University Place and Twelfth-street.

and form a horizontal bond to the composition, in the place nearest above the eye, where it is most required. But the cast-iron window heads, and the brackets to the cornice of the houses are very offensive to good taste, being of a nondescript upholsterer's style, and seeming as if stuck on, as, indeed, they are, and they are only allowable on the score of economy.

St. George's Rectory, the residence of Dr. Tyng, opposite the houses just mentioned, is a plain brown-stone building, not remarkably pleasing in itself, nor successful in the vain attempt to harmonize a modern five-story house with the Italian Gothic style of the church adjoining. This imitation has only been made in the porch, the architraves of the windows, and the cornices to the gables. But we have no authority in antiquity, nor reason in common sense to apply church ornaments to domestic dwellings. What the domestic architecture of the so-called *Byzantine* period really was, would puzzle the enthusiastic but paradoxical author of "The Stones of Venice" to inform us. But judging by analogy from the old English, French, and Netherlands remains, it probably re-

sembled any thing rather than their church architecture.

For a similar reason, we cannot commend the attempt at Gothic street-architecture, at the corner of Twentieth-street and Sixth Avenue, opposite the church of the Holy Communion; although its novelty and prettiness may be taking to an inexperienced eye. In placing the gables towards the street, it is far more true to principle than the Gothic row in Fifth Avenue. But this mode of roofing is very objectionable, as tending to accumulate snow and rains in the intermediate hollows. The details of these buildings, however, are incorrect, and flimsily executed; being only of stuccoed brick, and sanded wood. We know of no successful efforts in Gothic street-architecture, in England or in this country: we have no models in antiquity of this kind except collegiate buildings; and for churches and colleges we are of opinion that the Gothic style, if used at all in cities, should be kept sacred.

The view of West Twenty-first-street from Fifth Avenue affords an averaged specimen of domicils in this neighborhood, but we regret that the scale of our engraving is too small adequately to represent the variety of styles and decorations that are here found within a small compass: some of the fronts being of the purer Italian, others of the French style

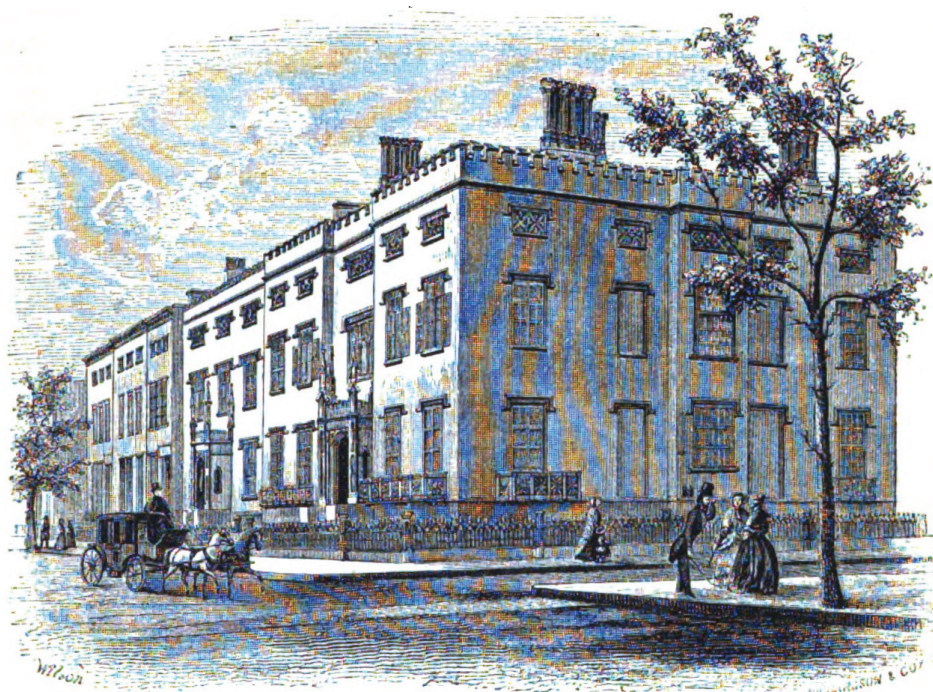
of Louis XIV. or XV., and others with spurious *Gothic* labels over the windows, supported by *Grecian* brackets! But, in spite of these incongruities, the quiet tone of color of these buildings, the inviting elegance of the doorways and flights of steps, the absence of noise, the verdure of the shade trees against the brilliant sky, and some spire or tower picturesquely terminating the vista—all combine to produce an agreeable frame of mind in the passer-by; who, while mentally penetrating *within* these handsome exteriors, and reflecting upon all the "appliances and means" of happiness contained there, may well be reconciled to any incongruities of style in the dwellings in remembering the fortunate condition of those who inhabit them.

Adjoining the right-hand houses in this street there is now in process of erection, but not sufficiently forward for illustration when these engravings were made, a work, which in point of grandeur of scale, and magnificence of design, will surpass any former effort of the kind that we possess. We allude to the New Club House at the corner of West Twenty-first-street and Fifth Avenue; of which, to convey some general idea, we subjoin a brief description. The building is of three stories in height above the basement; but the two principal stories are nearly equal in height to four of the adjoining dwelling-

houses. The longest front is towards Twenty-first-street, of five windows in width, the two external ones being wider Venetian windows of three compartments, and placed in the centre of two slight projections from the main wall. The front to the Avenue has three windows in width, and no break in the line of wall. The entrance doorway is in the centre of the long front, with an arched head and two three-quarter Corinthian columns, projecting from pilasters, a pediment above, and the entablature continued round the two fronts. There



Corner of Fifth Avenue and Tenth-street.



Fifth Avenue, corner Twelfth-street.

are coupled Corinthian pilasters at all the angles of the building, ranging with the columns at the door; and two isolated columns, with their entablature, projecting out from the centre of the narrowest front; between these columns is a very rich arched Venetian window, supported by smaller Ionic columns. The windows of the second story have circular pediment heads, those of the upper story angular pediments; all of them supported by very rich brackets and architraves. Grooved corner-stones are continued up the angles of the building over the coupled pilasters, till they reach a grand Corinthian entablature and cornice, which crowns the whole edifice. The general effect is that of a Venetian *palazzo*: we only wish it had been of white marble, instead of brown stone. This superb building has been erected for the Union Club.

The extensive row of dwellings in West Twenty-third-street, called London Terrace, was erected by Mr. Horseley Palmer, of the Bank of England. It has a more imposing effect in the engraving than the reality warrants, the houses being of but moderate dimensions. The centre of the row is indicated by a raised parapet (over the carriage in our cut), the farthest extremity having a hexagonal bow similar to that of the nearest corner house; with three unmeaning and ineffective projec-

tions from the general line of the front on each side of the centre. The design consists of Grecian pilasters and entablature of the height of three stories; but the pilasters are too tall and too close together, and the windows have the appearance of the stage-boxes of a theatre, and the whole front the flat character of joiner's work. The buildings are of brick stuccoed, of an agreeable light tint, and appear to stand the weather well: the basements are of brown stone; the attics of wood.

Mr. Waddell's residence, at the corner of Fifth Avenue and Thirty-eighth-street, may be called a suburban villa, and is remarkable for being inclosed in its own garden ground, which is as high as the original level of the island, and descends by sloping grass banks to the grade of the street. Our objections to *rows* of houses in the Gothic style, do not apply to this case. The general composition and effect is picturesque and commendable, notwithstanding an occasional want of character and correctness in the details. It is built of brick stuccoed, with brown sand-stone dressings, the color of which does not quite harmonize with the yellowish gray of the walls: external blinds we have already noticed as incompatible with Gothic mullioned windows. A conservatory, and various offices extend to the left: there is also a Gothic cottage



East Fourteenth-street, from Fifth Avenue.

lodge on the north side of the garden, of which, and of the whole ground, a fine

view is obtained from the terrace of the Croton Reservoir ; while two or three old

trees still standing in the garden on that side add to the semi-rural character of the edifice.

The above is a specimen of our "Domestic Architecture ;" which, we think, considering its very recent pretensions to attraction as a fine art, has made a far more satisfactory progress than our public, commercial, or ecclesiastical structures, except in a few instances. For the sake of our distant, and foreign readers, we may add, that the *interiors* of the stores, hotels, and private dwellings we have represented, are, besides being replete with every modern convenience, in point of decoration and furniture, of a more elaborate, showy, and generally tasteful character than the exteriors ; and, owing to the greater diffusion of wealth and luxury, more rich and costly than those of corresponding buildings in Europe.



Fifth Avenue, corner Fifteenth-street.

Objections have been made, on moral and economical grounds, to the display of wealth and splendor in architectural decoration, but, we cannot think with justice: we regard it as the mere natural and normal expression of progress, the counterpart of that formerly exhibited by the great commercial republics of Italy and Holland. Luxury is a vice, only when it is extravagance in an individual: the private vices of ostentation and extravagance become public benefits to trade and industry. The due scale of expense for every grade of society can never be fixed by lawgiver or moralist. The sumptuous

environments of the richest merchant are by use and familiarity no greater luxuries to him, than more homely comforts are to the mechanic; and in a country, where all are striving to get rich, it may seem to be hypocrisy and envy, to cavil at the use and display of riches. But, viewed in a public light, every external indication of prosperity tends to add attractions to a city, and to promote its increase and influence in more important objects.

The Bowery Savings' Bank was not included in our former illustrations of public buildings of that kind. We venture



Corner of Fifth Avenue and Fifteenth-street.

to pronounce this one of the most original and successful compositions of its size and class which we hitherto possess. It may be a little overloaded with ornament, not of the best taste, but it has higher claims to praise, than the mere application of ornament. It is a well studied design, and unites variety and uniformity, relief and prominence, light and shade, in a remarkable degree. It will be observed that the main division of the front into three compartments is not arbitrary, but suggested and demanded by the three doorways required. This is also a sufficient reason for making the windows over

the doors larger and richer, and of different shape from the intermediate ones. But the centre doorway and windows are, besides, made wider than the two side ones, with the addition of three-quarter columns to the door to make it the main point of attraction. The entablature over these columns, and the upper cornice of the building, are the bonds of unity to the composition; while the parapet is divided by the balustrades into five compartments to correspond to the first story below. The variation of the upper window-heads, and the insertion of the two small panels in blank spaces otherwise too bare, are

finishing touches to design, which show the hand of an artist.

It is very natural and very proper that the commercial buildings of a commercial city, should be in themselves the embodiments of the city's greatness and wealth. We are a church-going people, undeniably, and our churches are among the most conspicuous monuments of our thrift and prosperity; but it is in our stores and banking-houses that the real feeling of our merchants is most palpably embodied. Our banks for savings, which might reasonably be plain and unostentatious, are among the most showy and beautiful of our financial buildings.

The savings-bank in Chambers-street is a grand and solid structure of granite, and there is a highly ornamental façade of polished white marble, now in course of erection, in Broadway, for the Broadway Savings Bank. The Seamen's Savings Bank on the corner of Pearl and Wall-streets, of brown free-stone, is one of the handsomest and most imposing buildings in the business quarter of the city.

While "Broadway, New-York," is the most famous and oftenest-borrowed name of any street in the United States, and perhaps the only one that has any European name and celebrity, the curiosity of our untravelled readers may be excited to inquire, what street and city in Europe do Broadway and New-York most resemble? Formerly, when so many trees were on the sidewalks, our first impression was its resemblance to a Parisian *Boulevard*; that is, one of those wide streets, lined with trees, that form a belt round the city of Paris. And, from the



West Sixteenth-street near Fifth Avenue.

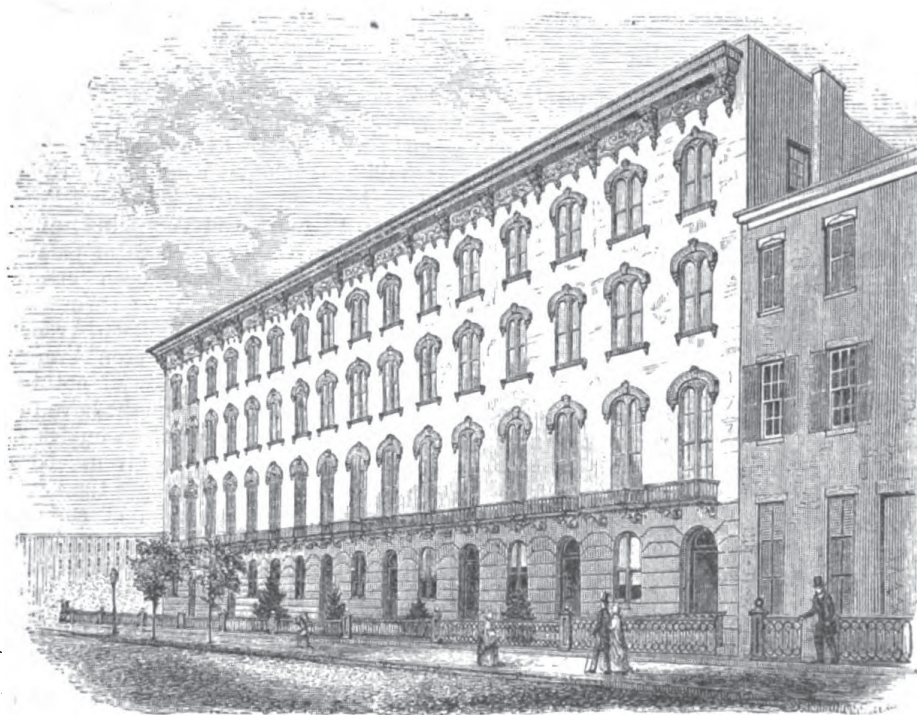
abundance of its foreign population, we still think the general aspect of our city a medium between that of Paris and a sea-port of the Netherlands; with the addition of an atmosphere, not second in brilliance to Italy. But the peculiarity of Broadway consists in its being not only the *principal*, but the *only* main artery of the city, not only the focus, but the agglomeration of trade and fashion, business and amusement, public and private abodes, churches and theatres, bar-rooms and exhibitions, all collected into one promiscuous channel of activity and dissipation. As Paris is France, so is Broadway New-York: but this should not be. Fresh channels are imperatively demanded by its present over-crowded state, when carts and omnibuses are daily at a dead-lock for half an hour together, and the pedestrian, desirous of crossing, stands in the situation of the rustic in Horace, waiting upon the bank until the river has run by! Whether the with-

drawal of the licences of so many omnibuses, the substitution of a railway, or the widening and continuing of other streets to the Battery, are to effect this improvement, or whether they are not all required together, this is not the place to determine. We would only hint at a few other improvements required, before Broadway can be a thoroughfare worthy of the city: such as the perfect cleansing of the streets, the removal of obstructions from the side-walks, of the few still remaining wooden shanties, and low grogeries, as well as of vulgar, obtrusive, and disgusting exhibitions, that disgrace the name of *Museums*. As in trade we put our best goods foremost, so let us at all events keep our inevitable vices, follies, and vulgarities in the background. A great metropolis must have its bright side. But there are no evils without corresponding advantages; and, viewed in connection with the influence of New-York upon the whole United States, all such evils sink into significance, compared with the *national, liberal and cosmopolitan spirit* that is generated only, by *one acknowledged central city* of a great country; that shall frown down all local animosities, and sectarian bigotries, and give its stamp of approval to the political will of the majority, to commercial credit and enterprise, to medical and judicial knowledge, and to general literature and

education; as well as become "the glass of fashion and the mould of form," in matters of taste, and in the fine arts; the value of which is now universally attested in teaching the world

"To live like brothers, and conjunctive all
Embellish life."

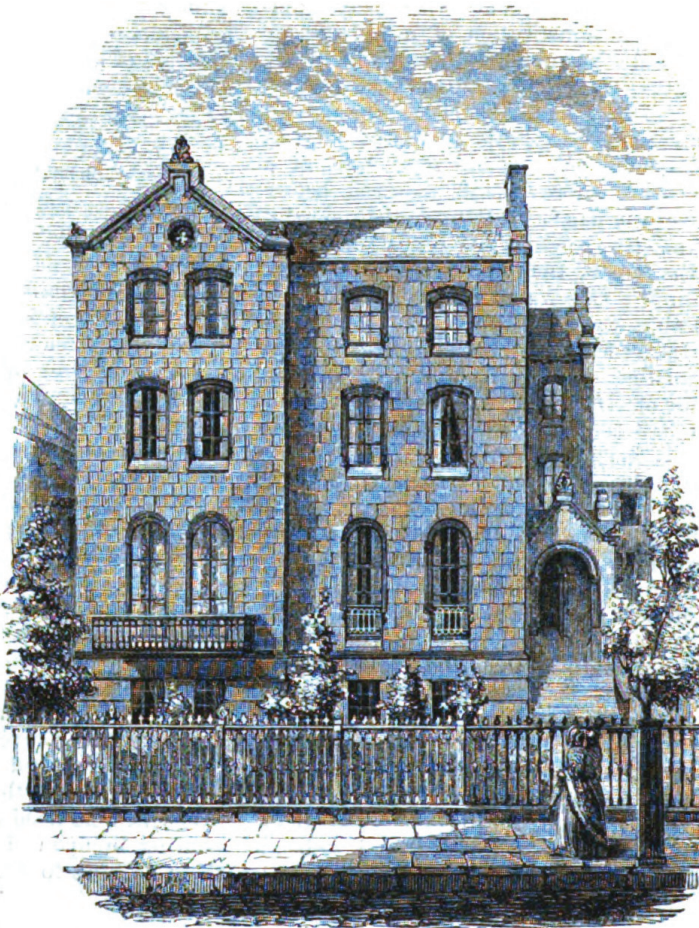
But, as we have before observed, New-York is only beginning to develop herself, and every day is tending to make her what she inevitably must be, in spite of the jealous opposition of neighboring towns, the queen city of the Atlantic—the great metropolis of the West. New-Yorkers are too much absorbed in their schemes of business and pleasure to take heed of the rivalries and jealousies of their neighbors; they find the wealth of the world pouring into their hands, and have no time to waste upon the angry feelings of those who envy their more fortunate condition. The complaint that New-York is the worst governed city in the Union, and the most neglected by its own inhabitants, is, unquestionably, well founded as relates to the management of its municipal affairs; but then this mismanagement and neglect, however much they lead to inconveniences and disorders, are owing to the rapid growth of the city, and the overwhelming flood of business constantly pouring in upon the people which give them no time to attend to public affairs.



East Sixteenth-street opposite St. George's Church.

If things go wrong in the city government, if the streets are neglected, if the public purse is plundered, if the taxes are high, our citizens console themselves with the reflection that their own private affairs are all right, their private residences are externally beautiful and internally well arranged, and the taxes can easily be borne.

Broadway will soon cease to be the main artery of the city and will become a mere channel for the commercial life of the city to ebb and flow in; it terminates, properly, at Union Square, and above this point lies now the most beautiful part of the city; nearly every one of the illustrations we have given, in this article, of the domestic architecture of New-York are of examples in streets above Union Square. The finest residences are to be found in the magnificent avenues which stretch away through the centre of the island towards the Harlem river; of these the Fifth and Second avenues are now the noblest, and present the most splendid ranges of private residences. Crossing these magnificent streets at right angles, and leading from river to river, are Fourteenth, Twenty-third, and Thirty-seventh streets, each of them a hundred feet in width, and containing residences of great beauty and truly splendid proportions. Every street below Union Square is destined to be converted to business purposes, but it must be many years before commerce will invade the sanctity of the great avenues above it, excepting those that have been devoted to trade in the beginning, such as the Third, Fourth, Seventh, and Ninth Avenues; regions of which many old inhabitants who reside below Union Square know hardly more than they do of Belgravia or the Boulevards. The illustrations in this article do



St. George's Rectory, Sixteenth-street.

but indicate the general character of our new streets, for there are many noble squares and places from which we have not taken a single example. Union Square, Madison Square, Gramercy Park, Stuyvesant Square, and Tompkins Square all contain private residences of palatial pretensions, which have been erected within these few years past; then, there are the Second Avenue, Madison Avenue, Fourteenth-street, and Lexington Avenue, from which we have borrowed nothing, although either of them might have furnished a greater number of examples of fine houses than we have given. New-York is no longer what Cooper the novelist called it, "an extension of common places;" wealth and fashion have begun to crystallize in certain spots which they have appropriated as their own domain, and natural centralization is accomplishing for our society what laws could never effect.

The growing scarcity and dearness of building lots are producing a great revolu-

tion in the economy of domestic dwellings; the whole city is laid out in lots of twenty-five feet front and a hundred feet in depth, on the supposition of a perfect equality in the social condition of every family. But, it has been found convenient for some families to live in houses of smaller dimensions, while some others require larger; and two houses are now sometimes constructed on one lot, while the majority of the new buildings are not more than twenty feet in front; and it has been found that quite as spacious rooms may be had in a house of twenty feet front, as in the old style of houses built on a full sized lot. The new style, instead of cutting off a hall or entry of five feet from the parlors, divides the

basement story, or first floor, into two apartments of equal width, one serving as a hall and the other as an office, and putting the parlors on the second floor, the whole width of the house, with a vestibule between the two, making a suite of three handsome rooms when the sliding doors are thrown open. The houses in Sixteenth-street, of which we have given an engraving, are constructed in this manner, on lots but nineteen feet in width, and are much more spacious, elegant, and convenient than any of the old style of twenty-five feet houses we have ever seen. Many of the new blocks on the Fifth Avenue constructed in this manner, though of even a smaller frontage, have a very



Block in Twentieth-street corner Sixth Avenue.

imposing and elegant appearance, while the interiors are finished with a degree of splendor which could not have been indulged in by their owners in houses of greater extent. The improved methods of lighting and warming houses, and the use of Croton water, together with the general system of drainage now almost universally adopted have led to great economy of space in the construction of city dwellings, and it seems hardly possible that any thing more compact, cosy, comfortable and elegant in the shape of a dwelling house will ever be invented, than the first class houses now built in the upper part of the city. Painted ceil-

ings, gilded cornices, and floors of colored marbles, or inlaid with vari-colored woods were once very rare, even in the houses of the wealthiest merchants; but now these elegancies are so common that their absence would be much more likely to excite remark than their presence.

Too many of the better class of houses in New-York are of a monumental character, solid in structure, massive in appearance, and calculated only for the occupancy of families with almost princely incomes. They are too costly to be occupied by the descendants of those who construct them, and can be turned to no profitable account by any one who may

purchase them; the absence of a law of primogeniture will prevent them from ever gaining an historical interest, for they cannot remain long in the occupancy of the same family, and must of necessity come to an ignoble destiny very soon after their owners have deserted them. We should imagine that such considerations as these would be an effectual bar to the erection of large and costly houses in such a city as New-York, where fortunes are no sooner accumulated than they are dispersed, on the death of their possessors, and families rise and fall continually like the waves of the ocean. The wealthy merchant builds himself a palace to-day which will be inhabited by the son of his porter to-morrow; or at the best be used as a



West Twenty-first-street from Fifth Avenue.

boarding-house by the widow of his clerk. There are now remaining in New-York



London Terrace, West Twenty-third-street.

but two of the fine old mansions which were built before the Revolution, and one of them is occupied as an emigrant boarding-house, and the other as a restaurant. If their builders could have foreseen the base uses to which they have come, they would probably have taken less pains and pride in their erection. Where the laws of primogeniture prevail, a man may well take pride in building and ornamenting a mansion which he feels assured will be inhabited through all time by his descendants; but where it is quite certain that his house must pass into the possession of strangers as soon as he leaves it, it can hardly be expected that one should build as though he were founding a dynasty. Yet our merchants and land speculators do build themselves houses of sufficient solidity and grandeur to satisfy the architectural sentiment of even the exacting author of the "Seven Lamps," who maintains that dwelling houses ought to be built as durably as the pyramids.

For our own part, we ought to feel grateful to these men who are willing to lavish their wealth in the erection of costly houses which so beautify our streets and thoroughfares, and render a walk through our avenues as agreeable as a visit to a gallery of art; yet we cannot help thinking that so much wealth, such stores of valuable materials, and so much intelligent labor as they have cost, might better serve the cause of human happiness by being employed in other ways. But we will not quarrel with those who contribute in any manner to the public welfare, even though in doing so they have no higher object than self-glorification. The excessive ornamentation of the street fronts of some of the new houses "up town," remind one of the anecdote of a noble architect in London, who built himself a very showy house after his own designs, and was advised by Lord Chesterfield to hire the house opposite, that he might enjoy the view of his own mansion.

The use of iron and glass are effecting an architectural revolution in the con-



Bowery Savings' Bank.

struction of stores and warehouses, and it will not be long, we imagine, before these materials will enter more largely than they have done into the construction of private dwellings; and the time is probably not very far distant when we shall have to live in those brittle mansions which make people proverbially cautious about throwing missiles at their neighbors.

In the meanwhile, the new city that is springing up beyond the sound of the busy wheels of trade, consists of solid and substantial structures, which will outlast many generations of our posterity, if no disturbing causes interfere to prevent their gradual decay. A law has been enacted authorizing the formation of a park beyond the present lines of city improvement, which will convert the central part of the island on which New-York is built into a pleasure ground, around which will spring up terraces, villas, and blocks of dwelling houses excelling in beauty and magnificence any we can now boast of in the New World, and giving new ideas of the beneficent principle of de-

mocracy, which permits the mind to expand to its utmost possibilities. The great obstacle to architectural improvement and embellishment in this country, has heretofore been the existing structures of the Old World, in imitation of which nearly all our public and private edifices have been built. Hence our streets have been filled with costly and meaningless copies of Grecian porticoes, of Gothicized dwellings, of ambitious imitations of baronial castles, Egyptian tombs, turreted churches, useless campanile towers, and every thing else in the shape of a house of which a drawing could be found in a book. Our architecture can hardly be called eclectic, though it is composed of parts of every known style that has been in vogue since the days of Noah, because it is rather a jumble, than a selection of peculiarities. The great hope of our national success in art rests upon our achievements in ship-building, the greatest of the arts, for, in that department of industry, we have been thrown directly upon the resources of our own genius. Europe and the past had nothing to offer us worthy of imitation; we were placed in circumstances wholly new, and we required new instruments to enable us to achieve our purposes. The merchant who saw no absurdity in going back to the time of Pericles or Queen Elizabeth to

find a model for his town house or country villa, would have laughed at the folly of building his packet ship after the manner of a Greek galley, or in the shape of the gallant vessels that were to encounter the Spanish Armada. Yet, in the esthetic sense, there would be no greater folly in one case than in the other. The difference in the two cases is that the ship would be unprofitable, but the house might be inhabited. When we shall have outgrown our childish dependence upon the Old World, then we shall be able to boast of our own architects as we do now of our ship-builders. As yet, there is no such person as an American architect whose name is known beyond the circle of his own employers; nobody asks who designed this building or that, our Wrens, Joneses, and Palladios have yet to be developed; but the names of our ship-builders are among our national boasts, and George Steers, the yacht builder, has become renowned wherever the art of navigation is practised.

As private dwellings form the subject of the present article, we have not felt at liberty to give any statistics of the cost of the buildings noticed, or to make any part of them the subject of illustration or remark, excepting such as are exposed to the public eye and which may be regarded as legitimate objects of public comment.



Corner of Fifth Avenue and Thirty-seventh-street.

THE GREAT CEMETERY.

Palaontology of New-York: containing descriptions of the Organic Remains of the Lower and Middle Divisions of the New-York System; equivalent to the Silurian and Lower Devonian Rocks of Europe. By JAMES HALL. Volumes I. and II. Albany: Published on Behalf of the State of New-York.

THERE is a place of burial, older and grander than the uninstructed mind of man ever imagined, ordained when the foundations of the earth were laid, destined to receive, and to perpetuate to the end, the mortal frames of all living forms which our planet has sustained. And in their preserving epitaphs which cannot be distrusted, monumental statues and relieves above the suspicion of incorrectness, nature herself has provided for those who, during all time, shall desire to trace back the long order and sequence of the past; a series of inscriptions, from which the patience of the student and the earnest zeal of the historian may form a record of most certain authenticity.

By a singular paradox, the conservative agent by which all the past is made permanent, the repository of alphabets which can never become obsolete, and of inscriptions which can never be effaced, is the element which has been proverbially the type of wasting restlessness and instability.

The rain which dashes on the hills, slowly, but surely, wears away their substance. The originally pure element descends every slope, loaded with solid earth, either dissolved in a limpid stream, or suspended in a turbid torrent. The mould of every field, the banks of every ravine, the surface of every rock are wasting and wearing. Slowly indeed, for in few instances can the brief experience of man's observation perceive the change. But it is not the less real and certain. Since the day when the first clouds shed their burden on the earth, and the eldest of rivers began to feel its slow way to the deepest basin, the work of abrasion has gone steadily on until now, and it must go on while earth and ocean remain. Every exposed inch of the earth's surface is sending its tribute through the ever-flowing rivers to the sea. Out from myriads of estuaries pour the fresh floods laden with the waste of the land. Far away from shore, swept out by tides and currents, float the particles brought from the plateaus of Central Asia, or the prairies of Nebraska; mingled with others, worn from myriads of leagues of coast by the

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unceasing action of the billows. In the still depths of ocean they settle down, precipitated in an impalpable sediment, but so slowly, that months elapse while it attains the thickness of the pulp which on the paper-cylinder formed this white sheet. Though in many local instances, near the mouths of rapid rivers, or coasts worn by impetuous currents, coarse and heavy sands are deposited much more rapidly, the general process must be exceedingly slow. For the sea-deposits can be formed no faster than the waste of the dry land supplies material, and the filling up of the ocean's bed must be as imperceptible in its progress as is the wearing down of the continents. Slow as the change is, yet year after year, century after century, cycle after cycle it continues, and new layers are added to the increasing pile in every age. The deposits formed during this century overlies and conceal those of the last; beneath these lie those of preceding ages; and, at the base of all, are buried those of the first period of creation.

But it is not only the inanimate dust of earth which is thus carried into this great storehouse. There the remains of innumerable forms of fishes and all aquatic things lie, and settle into the oozy bottom. Thither float reeds, and leaves, and tree-trunks, drifted from every shore. Thither tend the skeletons of drowned quadrupeds of a thousand species, swept down the swollen rivers and across the surf far out to sea. There, too, sink the bones of sea-fowl and exhausted land birds. And there, in this latter age of man's dominion, lie scattered over the bottom the lonely remains of thousands who die on the ocean; and thither, year after year, descend hundreds of ships, to leave their oaken ribs for ever in that region of nether gloom.

Over all spreads the sediment. Softly and slowly through the green middle depths it settles downward, and enshrouds every relic in its folds. Film on film, inch on inch, fathom on fathom, from the beginning of the world it has accumulated, while the relics of all living forms of earth, or air, or ocean, have been committed to its keeping. And just as the earth now borne to the Atlantic from the rivers of Europe and America, is beginning to bury the huge timbers of the lost steamer President and the skeletons of her crew,—so does the deepest and oldest layer hidden below contain the remains of those races which populated land and sea, when that

first and lowest foot of the series was deposited.

There is the Great Cemetery. Layer above layer are spread its graves, over millions of square miles. Tier above tier lie its tenants in one great series, from the lowest to the highest in place, from the earliest to the latest in date. There are buried in darkness the records of all past time. The once soft ooze and silt which enveloped them, has been setting and hardening through unknown ages, until its contents are now hermetically sealed up, as closely and imperishably as the heart of Bruce was bound in its investing mass of hardened bitumen.

These relics lie beyond our grasp. No sounding lead or dredge can reach below the newest and softest layer of their burial clay. They are inaccessible, and while the imagination is excited at the thought of their existence, the mind admits the hopelessness of solving the mystery which surrounds them.

Yet is there no possibility of obtaining some glimpses of these secrets? In some quarter of the globe where volcanic fires burn fiercest, where their forces have depressed the land beneath the sea, and lifted up the ocean-bed to become dry land,—perhaps on the coast of Chili or among the islands of the Pacific,—may not the elevation of some old sea-bottom, and its breaking up by clefts and fissures, have exposed some part of this vast necropolis? Is it not practicable to find some such locality, where we may trace back the downward series, and distinguish the remains of later centuries from the deeper buried relics of more distant ages? And,—as the antiquary digging in the mounds near the Ohio or the Dnieper, or in the long-accumulating sands which overspread the shores of the Nile, recognizes in the fashion and workmanship of the articles which he finds, evidence of the character of vanished nations and the civilization of ante-historic periods,—may we not, from the relics of these old ocean-sands, learn whether the living things of the early ages were like those of our own day; or whether a variety of plan and different forms of animated existence have maintained a perpetual change, and the present tenants of earth are but the latest development of one long and varying series?

This is not a dream, but a reasonable speculation. That such remains exist, seems almost certain. That, though inaccessible in their original position, they may by natural causes be brought within our view, is not improbable.

And, to drop at once the theoretical

course of thought which we have been pursuing, and pass abruptly to the statement of proved facts,—they *are* within our reach. Not only in remote and isolated localities, but almost every where, the successive tiers of this Great Cemetery, with the remains of its innumerable dead, have been uplifted to light and air. Every hill built up of layers of stone is a portion of this universal monument, a remaining mass of vast uplifted tracts of old sea-deposits; which, originally formed from the waste of earlier continents, have since their upheaval been in turn worn into ravines and valleys; and from which our rivers are daily returning their substance to the sea whence they arose, there to entomb anew the forms of later ages.

In spite of an hundred scientific books, and of the boasted diffusion of practical knowledge, this simple assertion will be read by many with entire incredulity. A score of difficulties and objections will suggest themselves, to all of which one answer is sufficient, "Go and see." The evidence is open to all, in the gorge of the cascades of Trenton,—along the slaty banks of Lake Erie,—in the ledges of the Genesee,—in almost every quarry between the Hudson and the Rocky Mountains.

There are to be examined the actual relics hoarded up by the primeval ocean. There, from its hardened slime and sand, may be collected in abundance the scattered frames and imprints of its tenants. Each stony cast was a living thing when that rock was a loose, soft mass under the water, thousands of feet below its present place.

There in abundance are shells, some entire and closed as when living, others open and flattened out, others still with their valves separated and mixed confusedly together.

There the large and beautiful nautilus lies clenched in the hardened ooze in which it sank, which at the application of the chisel parts off and reveals the graceful outline, the striated surface, and its curiously chambered interior. Within its cavity perhaps lie some tiny contemporaries, forced in with the mud which filled its apartment when first vacated by the death and decay of its builder tenant.

There are spread out the jointed columns and graceful tufted heads of the encrinites,—those singular links between animated beings and lower organic forms, so abundant and varied during early periods, so few and rare in our modern seas. There are the vague and half defined impressions of the seaweeds of that ancient ocean. There are its corals, perfect in every

branch and pore,—some, which were of parasitic character, still attached to the shell on which they began to grow. There are the dissevered joints and plates, sometimes the entire forms, of its crustaceans, their many-faceted eyes yet distinct as when they first admitted the light. There are the oldest of all starfishes, with their symmetrical form and complicated structure perfectly preserved. And there, on the sandy slab which was once the margin of a shoal or beach,—and yet retains the ripple-marks of the waves,—are plainly visible the trails of shellfish, which crawled upon it, when it was as soft and yielding as it now is hard and unchangeable. We have said that it is a seeming paradox that the wasting and restless sea should be the means of perpetuating the forms of the beginning even to the end ;—it is also the strangest of truths, that the print on the tidewashed sands, the very proverbial type and symbol of evanescence, should thus become an imperishable record.

All these relics which occur within the limits of New-York, collected with the utmost patience, studied with the minutest care, scrupulously compared with both living and fossil analogues from all explored regions, grouped together in their natural association, accurately described and figured, form the subject and contents of the work referred to at the head of this article. Belonging to some of the earliest deposits of the Great Cemetery, they are of the most interesting and instructive character, and form, so far as yet finished, the most valuable collection of their kind yet made in any country. The form of the territory comprised within the state of New-York displays the order and succession of the layers which underlie it with remarkable clearness, while the relics imbedded in them are abundant and well preserved. So fortunate an opportunity for research occurring within this State, has been prosecuted with a liberality of patronage honorable to an enlightened commonwealth, and with an ability honorable to the earnest students of nature to whom the task has been committed ; and the result is a contribution of the first value to the great cause of "the increase and diffusion of knowledge among men."

These handsome volumes are in fact a collection of authentic monumental inscriptions ; not indeed a history, but a magazine of historical facts. And as the splendid works depicting the remains of Roman art disinterred from the ashes of Vesuvius, furnish the historian with a

multitude of facts from which to restore the age of the Cæsars—so the descriptions and illustrations of this and similar works will supply materials from which the infinitely older story of the earth's progress will one day be compiled.

It is not our purpose in this brief article to speak of the details of these volumes. The most cursory reader will be impressed with the evidence of care and accuracy presented in the minute descriptions of some seven hundred different species of fossils which they comprise, and the constant reference to European works in which information illustrative of the subject may be obtained. The engravings, (over two hundred plates, comprising on an average six or eight figures each), not only present striking pictorial representations, but show every detail of structure, and the very texture of the specimen, so that the plate will sometimes bear magnifying almost like the original. A little examination of the illustrations of the corals and orinoids of the Niagara rocks, and of the trilobites of these and of the Trenton limestone, will show how high a degree of artistic excellence has been attained.

We have spoken of this work as a valuable contribution to the general and catholic cause of science. It is worth a few minutes' reflection, to note from how many quarters contributions of the same character, drawn from widely-separated portions of the same vast field, are being added to the common stock of knowledge.

Among the old deposits known to be of similar antiquity with those of New-York (the unbroken continuity of which to the Mississippi has been traced by Hall, Owen, Whitney, and others), are, first, those so early explored in the southwest of England by Sir Roderick Murchison, and afterwards in the same region and in Ireland by the British Geological Survey. In the north of Russia, Murchison and Deverneuil have found strata with similar remains extending for hundreds of leagues. The existence of extensions of the same deposits has long been known in Scandinavia and near the Rhine. Barrande now sends the most ample illustrations of a vast series of the same age in Bohemia ; and even from the Cape of Good Hope, and the stony layers of the Table Mountain, are brought relics similar to, if not identical with, those of the slates of Central New-York. The separate investigations of all these scattered observers are gradually consolidating into a general system, which not only restores the living